

**Claims**

1. Method for the attachment of addressee-specific media to printed products, involving the steps:

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a) provision (2) of an EDP-supported database structure, which allocates to a respective addressee of a printed product information characterising the addressee;

10 b) production (3, 7 to 20) of a plurality of addressee-specific media (126) using information from the database structure, each medium (126) containing specific information for a respective addressee;

15 c) completion (21 to 25) of addressee-specific printed products, each printed product being made addressee-specific at least in that an addressee-specific medium (126) is attached to at least one provided location; and

20 d) provision of the printed products for an addressee-specific delivery (26, 27) on the basis of information from the database structure and/or on the basis of information contained in an addressee-specific medium (126).

2. Method according to claim 1, characterised in that, for the completion of each printed product, a plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) are assembled (24) for forming inner pages of the finished printed product, provided

25 with a cover page and stapled or bound (27) and, for the completion of the respective addressee-specific printed product, at least one of the plurality of addressee-specific media (126) is attached (23) to at least one printed sheet (120a), a plurality of addressee-specific media (126) preferably being attached to the printed product and the format of the addressee-specific media (126) 30 being different from that of the printed product.

3. Method for producing addressee-specific printed products wherein, for the completion of each printed product, a plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) are assembled (24) for forming inner pages of the finished printed product, provided with a cover page and stapled or bound (27), an EDP-

5 supported database structure, which allocates to the respective addressee of each printed product information characterising the addressee, being provided (2), at least one of the printed sheets (120a) becoming an addressee-specific printed sheet as a result of the attachment of addressee-specific information to

at least one predetermined location, the printed products being provided after 10 the completion for an addressee-specific delivery (26, 27) on the basis of information from the database structure and/or on the basis of the addressee-specific information on the personalised printed sheet (120a), characterised in

that a plurality of addressee-specific media (126), the format of which is different from that of the finished printed product, are produced (3, 7 to 20)

15 using information from the database structure, each medium (126) containing characteristic information for a respective addressee, and in that, for the completion of the respective addressee-specific printed product, at least one of the plurality of addressee-specific media (126) is attached (23) to the at least one addressee-specific printed sheet (120a), a plurality of addressee-specific 20 media (126) preferably being attached to the printed product.

4. Method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, characterised in that, during completion of each addressee-specific printed product, the final assembly (24) and stapling (27) or binding of the finished printed product take

25 place only after the attachment (23) of an addressee-specific medium (126) to a provided location in the printed product.

5. Method according to claim 4, characterised in that the completion of each printed product involves the following steps:

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a) assembly of anonymous printed sheets (120b, 120c) of the respective printed product, with which sheets no addressee-specific medium (126) is

associated, in sequence up to and including a printed sheet (120a) to be made addressee-specific, with which an addressee-specific medium (126) is associated;

5    b) attachment to the printed sheet (120a) to be made addressee-specific of  
the addressee-specific medium/media (126) associated with the printed sheet  
(120a) to be made addressee-specific; and

10    c) assembly of the further printed sheets of the respective printed product,  
optionally with repetition of steps a) to b), until all of the printed sheets have  
been assembled.

6. Method according to claim 4, characterised in that the completion of each  
printed product includes the following steps:

15    a) attachment to the printed sheet (120a) to be made addressee-specific of  
the addressee-specific medium/media (126) associated with the respective  
printed sheet (120a) to be made addressee-specific and optionally carrying-out  
of this step for all further printed sheets to be made addressee-specific, with  
20    which addressee-specific media (126) are associated (23); and

25    b) assembly of all of the printed sheets of the respective printed product in  
sequence including the addressee-specific printed sheet (120a)/the addressee-  
specific printed sheets to which addressee-specific media (126) are attached  
(24).

30    7. Method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, characterised in that,  
during completion of each addressee-specific printed product, at least the final  
assembly of the finished printed product takes place before an addressee-  
specific medium (126) is attached.

8. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, characterised in that the completion of each addressee-specific printed product also involves reading out (22) and saving a machine-readable marking of an addressee-specific medium (126) in association with the attachment (23) of the addressee-specific medium 5 (126) to a printed product.

9. Method according to claim 8, characterised in that the production of the plurality of addressee-specific media also involves attachment (9, 9a, 10, 11) of the machine-readable marking to each medium (126) such that the addressee 10 associated with the medium (126) may be determined by means of the machine-readable marking.

10. Method according to either claim 8 or claim 9, characterised in that the provision for an addressee-specific delivery also involves the attachment (26) of 15 additional addressee-specific information to the substantially finished printed product on the basis of the saved marking of the at least one addressee-specific medium (126) contained in the printed product and/or on the basis of information from the database structure.

20 11. Method according to any one of claims 8 to 10, characterised in that the machine-readable marking is read out optically.

12. Method according to any one of claims 8 to 11, characterised in that for producing the machine-readable marking, a text in a machine-readable font, 25 preferably in an OCR font, is attached to the medium.

13. Method according to any one of claims 8 to 11, characterised in that for producing the machine-readable marking, a bar code is attached to the medium.

30 14. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 13, characterised in that the addressee-specific printed products are produced in a predetermined sequence

and the associated addressee-specific media (126) are produced in a corresponding sequence or are placed in such a sequence after production.

15. Method according to any one of claims 8 to 14, characterised in that the  
5 machine-readable marking is associated with an operating data record number, which in each case is continuously assigned, in the predetermined sequence in which the printed products are to be produced, to a printed product to be dispatched to a specific addressee.
- 10 16. Method according to claims 13 and 15, characterised in that the sequence of the read markings is compared to the predetermined sequence and on detection of discrepancies, corresponding corrective measures are carried out.
- 15 17. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 16, characterised in that during the production of the addressee-specific media (126), respective items of static information, which are identical for a large number of media, are processed and/or applied separately from items of dynamic information, which are different for each medium.
- 20 18. Method according to claim 17, characterised in that two supplementary prints are used for producing each addressee-specific medium (126); a first print (14, 15), which is identical for all of the addressee-specific media (126), being used for printing the static information and a second print (16, 17), which  
25 is produced or is to be produced for each medium (126), being used for printing the dynamic information.
- 30 19. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 18, characterised in that in the production of the addressee-specific media (126), a plurality of media (126) are produced per operating step, the media (126) being produced in a sequence in which optimum efficiency per operating step is achieved.

20. Method according to claim 19, characterised in that the media (126), during the production thereof, are placed temporarily in a different sequence from the predetermined sequence and are placed in the predetermined sequence after completion.

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21. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 20, characterised in that relatively small-format printed products, preferably cards, postcards or coupons, on which at least the name of the addressee is imprinted, are used as the addressee-specific media (126).

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22. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 21, characterised in that the printed products are stapled or adhesive-bound magazines or brochures.

23. System for producing printed products containing addressee-specific  
15 media (126), in particular according to one of the methods specified in claims 1 to 22, the system comprising an EDP-supported database (115) having a database structure, which allocates to a respective addressee of a printed product information characterising the addressee (2), a media production unit (122) for producing addressee-specific media (126), each medium (126)  
20 containing specific information for a respective addressee, a printed product production unit (100) for printing, assembling and stapling the respective printed product, which comprises a media attachment unit (124; 124') for the attachment of a respective medium (126) to at least one provided location of the printed product, and a dispatching unit (114) for preparing each substantially  
25 finished printed product for dispatch, wherein the dispatching unit (114) and the printed product production unit (100) and optionally also the media production unit (122) may be operated in coordination with one another such that the printed products, which are respectively turned into an addressee-specific printed product by means of at least one addressee-specific medium (126), may  
30 be provided for addressee-specific delivery.

24. System according to claim 23, characterised in that the printed product production unit (100) is configured for printing a cover page of each finished printed product and a plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) forming inner pages of the finished printed product, assembly of the cover page and the plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) and stapling or binding of the plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) including the cover page, wherein addressee-specific information may be attached to at least one of the printed sheets (120a), the addressee-specific printed sheet, at at least one predetermined location, the media production unit (122) being configured for the production of addressee-specific media (126), the format of which differs from the format of the respective printed product, and the media attachment unit (124; 124') being configured for the attachment of at least one of the plurality of addressee-specific media (126) to the at least one addressee-specific printed sheet (120a), wherein a plurality of addressee-specific media (126) may preferably be attached to each printed product.

25. System for the production of addressee-specific printed products, comprising an EDP-supported database (115) having a database structure, which allocates to a respective addressee of a printed product information characterising the addressee (2), a printed product production unit (100) for printing a cover page of each finished printed product and a plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) forming inner pages of the finished printed product, assembly of the cover page and the plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) and stapling or binding of the plurality of printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) including the cover page, wherein addressee-specific information may be attached to at least one of the printed sheets (120a), the addressee-specific printed sheet, at at least one predetermined location, and a dispatching unit (114) for preparing each substantially finished printed product for dispatch, characterised in that the system comprises at least one media production unit (122) for the production of a plurality of addressee-specific media (126), the format of which differs from the format of the respective printed product, each medium (126) containing specific information for an addressee, in that the

printed product production unit (100) comprises at least one media attachment unit (124; 124') for attachment of at least one of the plurality of addressee-specific media (126) to the at least one addressee-specific printed sheet (120a), wherein a plurality of addressee-specific media (126) may preferably be  
5 attached to the respective printed product, and in that the dispatching unit (114), the printed product production unit (100) and the media production unit (122) may be operated in coordination with one another such that the printed products, which are made addressee-specific printed products by means of at least one addressee-specific medium (126), may be provided for addressee-  
10 specific delivery.

26. System according to any one of claims 23, 24 or 25, characterised in that the printed product production unit (100) comprises a gatherer stitcher comprising a plurality of feeders (118a, 118b, 118c) for assembling individual  
15 printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) of the respective printed product, a media attachment unit (124) being connected upstream of each feeder (118a) provided for assembling the addressee-specific printed sheet (120a).

27. System according to any one of claims 23, 24 or 25, characterised in that  
20 the printed product production unit (100) comprises a gatherer stitcher comprising a plurality of feeders (118a, 118b, 118c) for assembling individual printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) of the respective printed product, the media attachment unit (124') being connected downstream of the feeders.

25 28. System according to any one of claims 23, 24 or 25, characterised in that  
the printed product production unit (100) comprises a gatherer stitcher comprising a plurality of feeders (118a, 118b, 118c) for assembling individual  
30 printed sheets (120a, 120b, 120c) of the respective printed product, a respective media attachment unit (124') being connected immediately downstream of a feeder (118a) provided for assembling a printed sheet (120a) to be made addressee-specific using an addressee-specific medium/addressee-specific media (126).

29. System according to any one of claims 23 to 28, characterised in that an information detection unit (130; 130'), which is configured for detecting information contained in the media (126), by means of which the addressee associated with the medium (126) may be determined, is associated with the media attachment unit (124; 124').

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30. System for the production of printed products according to any one of claims 23 to 29, characterised in that an information transmission unit (128), which is configured for transmitting to the media (126) information, by means of which the addressee associated with the medium (126) may be determined, is associated with the media production unit (122).

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31. System according to either claim 29 or claim 30, characterised in that the information detection unit (130; 130') or the information transmission unit (128) optically detects or transmits detectable signals and is configured, in particular, as an OCR font scanner or OCR font printer or as a bar code scanner or bar code printer.

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20 32. System for the production of printed products according to any one of claims 23 to 31, characterised in that the media production unit (122) is configured for the production of relatively small-format printed products, preferably cards, postcards or coupons, and the media attachment unit (124, 124') is configured for the attachment of relatively small-format printed products, preferably cards or postcards, to printed products.

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33. System according to any one of claims 23 to 32, characterised in that the system is configured for the production of stapled or adhesive-bound magazines or brochures.